DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 294 312 EA 019 992

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TITLE What Can Superintendents and Board Members Do To Help Each Other Be Successful?
PUB DATE Nov 87
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of States on Inservice Education (San Diego, CA, November 20-24, 1987).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Board Administrator Relationship; Board of Education Role; *Boards of Education; Elementary Secondary Education; School Surveys; *Superintendents
IDENTIFIERS Washington

ABSTRACT

School board members with concerns for success benefit the entire school district. An ambiguity between administration and policy-making necessitates a clarification of the role of the school board. The board should care about the quality of education and the district, recognize the increasing complexity of education, and represent the goals of public education. In the state of Washington, a survey was administered to 750 board members to assess their most successful experiences as school board members and to determine how they thought superintendents could make board members more successful. Among the 249 respondents' successful school board experiences were board cooperation, the selection of an effective superintendent, involvement in building programs, solving personal problems, passing a school levy, instigating new curricula, increasing community input, and improving school financial methods. Responses regarding how superintendents can make board members more successful included keeping the board informed; working openly with the board; conducting orientation sessions for the board; keeping up with budget conditions, state laws, and legislation; encouraging board members to attend conferences; demonstrating appreciation for the board's efforts; and involving the board in the establishment of goals. Twenty-three footnotes are attached. (RG)

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What Can Superintendents and Board Members Do To Help Each Other Be Successful?

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National Council of States on Inservice Education Conference
San Diego, California, November 23, 1987

Introduction

Back in the 1920's, Cubberly sought to persuade individuals who had been successful in their vocation, who had a good formal education, and who had a reputation for good judgment, honesty, fairness, cooperativeness, and public spiritedness, to become members of school boards. (1) Through the 1950's the literature on school board membership still discussed "success," whereas this same literature in the 1960's spoke of "effectiveness." (2) This subtle change had much to do with the political changes typified by those decades. During the 1950's we were concerned about keeping politics out of the schools, whereas during the 1960's we saw political implications in educational decisions. Many of us now realize that more "effective" politics does not necessarily equate with more "successful" education.(3)

Once again I believe we need success-oriented school board members who have the aspiration to foster excellence. Success breeds success. If a community can attract a success-oriented school board, that model will have desirable consequences all the way through a school district. If on the other hand a community elects a board that thrives on controversy, the probabilities increase that that is what they will get. A community has the responsibility of choosing a board worthy of public support. Too many communities ignore their responsibility and choose people who are merely active in seeking the office or who are on a campaign to change something.(4)

School board members have complex motives for their actions. However, they are to some extent success oriented by the very fact that they have been successful in gaining a position on the board. For the practicing superintendent, the practical question becomes, how can a superintendent strengthen that success-oriented value within each board member? If superintendents can increase the amount of success flowing to board members, hopefully more success-oriented candidates will run for office. Successful people are interested in participating in activities in which they can be successful. (5)

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The Changing Role of the Board

This study was suggested by Dr. Ivan Settles, former Placement Director at the University of Washington. He suggested that superintendents might well think about the question: what can they do to make board members successful? Dr. Settles expressed his sense that many board members feel frustrated in their role. They rarely are praised, and more often the best they can hope for is not to receive complaints. (6)

Brodinsky characterized this view when he said:

> America's school boards have been denounced, ridiculed, maligned, and bypassed as useless. Some teachers regard their board as an enemy. Some administrators see boards as meddlers in a profession too complex even for the expert. Some academicians say the board of education, which may have been useful in a simpler American society, has now outlived its usefulness. Finally it is charged that the board is all too often politics-minded, swaying and bending to partisan demands, carrying out the wishes of factions, sometimes at the expense of children and their education. (7)

If superintendents are going to help board members be successful, agreement must be reached on the role of the board. This role is most frequently described in contrast to the role of the superintendent: the board makes policy and the superintendent administers. However, this separation of powers is by no means as clear as it might seem to the uninitiated. Mullins (8) wrote that school boards and superintendents don't separate policy making from administrative functions. Mukensnabl (9) studied the relationship between school board member and superintendent expectations for decision-making behavior. A decision analysis document was used to record who superintendents and board members felt was responsible for making a decision. Of 57 incidents described in the instrument there were 50 significant differences in expectation between board members and their superintendents. Obviously the line between policy making and administration is blurred.

Perhaps Stephen Bailey (10) is closer to the truth when he says:

> . . . I have always been suspicious of those who simply parrot the old saw about trustees being responsible for the policy and presidents being responsible for administration. In the years when I was a member of the New York State Board of Regents, I finally discovered the only true meaning of the terms policy and administration: administration was anything the commissioner did that the regents agreed with; policy was anything the commissioner did that the regents disagreed with.

The point Bailey is making, even though he is talking about higher education, is that the distinction between policy and administration is of limited usefulness. According to Fine (11), "Policy is not developed ordinarily by school boards but reacted to upon presentation by the superintendent and voted upon." In most states model policies are written by staff attorneys at the school directors' association level and sent to school districts. These model policies are then normally revised slightly by superintendents to fit an individual district and ratified as a matter of routine business by school boards.

These statements of common practice lead one to reconsider the role of a board member. After all, if superintendents are going to help board members become successful, they must help them with something that board members actually can do, are doing, or should be doing.

The unique feature of school boards is that local people make decisions which affect, influence, and direct the education of the nation's youth. The local school board is a unique American institution developed by the American people because of faith in their ability to govern themselves, rendering expertise subservient to the will of the people. (12) Undeniably board members should be concerned about anything that profoundly affects the basic mission of the school district. Let us agree that the board and superintendent, serving on the same team, should care about the life of the district as a whole and the quality of education students are obtaining.

At the same time, board members must recognize that education is becoming more and more complex. (13) The disciplines of law, psychology, sociology, administration, information retrieval theory, and philosophy are constantly utilized in the conduct of contemporary educational institutions. It is simply unrealistic to try to help board members acquire a working knowledge in those fields as they pertain to education. Even if board members were to devote their full attention to their role, we must remember that school boards average a 25 percent annual turn-over rate. (14)

A board member who has been successful in his/her vocation, who has a good formal education, and who is basically a model of the kind of person the school district is trying to produce, serves a valuable role as society's representative guiding a school system. (15) A board member should stand for what it is we are trying to create through public education. If that board member has had the kind of success we respect, then that board member can help the public schools set their goals and objectives in that direction. On the other hand board members simply expert in the political process without having had success themselves are incompetent to recognize excellence or help others sail in that direction.

As Dykes has said:

> A board and a superintendent continuously involved in the process of developing and agreeing upon common aims will have little difficulty with other concerns. This relationship, evolving out of the process, will rest on the foundation of loyalty to common purposes. Reasonable insight into what is necessary to achieve such purpose will point the way to a sensible division of functions and responsibilities. (16)

What Can Superintendents Do To Make Board Members Successful?

After reviewing the literature, I will discuss what I found from a recent survey of 750 board members in the State of Washington. First, this is what the literature suggests:

1. Give board members a "pat on the back" of encouragement for the efforts these volunteers make.

2. Associate board members with specific accomplishments, such as construction projects or beautification programs. These projects are tangible and give those involved a sense of accomplishment. (17)

3. Help individual board members share in the satisfaction of being of service to the community. Normally this can be done through recognition at public ceremonies, such as commencement.

4. Provide board members with an opportunity to express their aspirations for the school district. This can be done by encouraging board members to assume leadership roles at goal setting meetings.

5. Provide board members with opportunities to describe successful accomplishments of the school system to the public in meetings with organizations and the media.

6. Provide board members an opportunity to participate in the district's strategy for selling good education to the community.

7. Help the board develop a vision of the school district, and out of that vision, a set of district goals. The superintendent should then provide the board with recommendations based on those goals, and encourage the board to involve itself in a continual review of institutional quality utilizing its vision of the district and specific goals as the criteria for measuring district progress.

Witkowsky (18) discussed some of the reasons why school boards do not meet the needs of the students and the schools. The really major topics, he said, such as what goals public schools are trying to attain and how to attain these goals are hardly ever discussed because most board meeting time is devoted to petty everyday items and legal technicalities.

8. In order for a board member to successfully describe the school district, he or she must have accurate and current information. A goal that the superintendent should strive to achieve in communicating with the board is that the board members should not learn any important piece of school information from any other source but the superintendent. (19)

9. Prepare board members for each meeting with a clearly written background statement or recommendation on each agenda topic. Contact each member of the board personally before each meeting to work out anticipated differences. "The success of most school board meetings is plainly dependent upon the amount and quality of the planning that precedes it." (20) Tuttle describes the "ideal" relationship between the superintendent and the board as follows:

> . . . The board, in consultation with the superintendent, and on the basis of all available facts, establishes the policies by which the schools will be operated, and where the superintendent, with the full approval of the board, exercises his professional skill in administering those policies and in reporting their effectiveness or need for modification to the board. (21)

10. Protect board members from exploitation. Successful service on the board cannot occur at the unreasonable expense of family and vocation. Membership on the board, just like accepting a position as superintendent, can become a never-ending task in which case no one ever becomes successful. It is important to avoid that "busyness" trap by helping board members delineate a reasonable amount of time to spend on a given topic, and then help them draw that matter to a conclusion.

11. Provide the new board member with a well planned orientation program, including information on how you as superintendent are going to help the new board member be successful. (22)

What Board Members in the State of Washington Said About Their Most Successful Experiences on the Board; What They Felt Superintendents Could Do To Make Their Board Membership Successful:

In preparation for this paper, I asked 750 board members in the State of Washington to answer the following two questions:

1. Please describe one successful experience you personally have had as a school board member.

2. What can superintendents do to help board members achieve success from serving on the board?

Thirty-six percent of the survey instruments were returned. Based upon the responses, answers to question number one could be grouped in the following weighted categories, listed from most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned:

1. Taking pride in the experience of board cooperation. (Approximately 64 out of 249 responses fell within this category.)(23)

   Individual respondents mentioned such successful experiences as: cooperating on the board, exchanging ideas with board members from other districts, handing out diplomas at graduation, realizing open communication between the board and superintendent, facilitating successful community projects such as sending the school band to Ireland, solving problems to the best interest of students (not pressure groups), connecting a patron with a problem to an educator with a solution, helping create a more unified district, and taking pride in the positive attitude which pervades the district.

2. Selecting an excellent superintendent (42/249).

3. Having participated in a building program (36/249):

Respondents mentioned individual projects, such as the building of a new high school, new library, or an energy efficient structure of some type, or the building of some volunteer project. Two respondents found success in having closed a school for financial reasons, and another respondent found success in having stopped a swimming pool project. But by far the majority of responses that fell in this category (29 of 36) mentioned specific building projects with which they had pleasurably been associated.

4. Having successfully settled a personnel problem (28/249).

Within this category individual responses included: settling a negotiation problem; developing a better teaching staff; removing "deadbeat" teachers; seeing a high school improve in spirit, attendance, and sportsmanship; working with the superintendent to defuse a problem created by a labor union activist; initiating multi-year teacher union contracts; and defending a coach against trivial parent problems.

5. Successful participation in goal setting and other general board processes (21/249):

Responses included: implementing a long range planning process; participating in district goal setting; developing a local district board policy manual; making changes in the bus routes; keeping class size small; defending academic freedom; keeping athletics in proper perspective; and seeing standards improve.

6. Passing a school levy (20/249).

7. Having initiated new curricula (20/249):

Responses included: introducing instruction in computers; beginning a special ed program; improving education for the gifted; developing minimum competency tests for graduation; implementing the middle school concept; developing a program to help students with specific language disabilities; and developing a new alcohol and drug program.

8. Increasing community input (15/249):

Responses included: encouraging input from community at board meetings (2 responses); establishing a citizen action committee (2 reponses); involving citizens in site committees (1 response); surveying the community (1 response); involving community in a principal selection procedure (1 response); "having members of the community tell me I am doing a good job because I react to their needs" (1 response); combining curriculum and learning objective committees to give public more input (1 response); learning to be my own person (1 response); alerting the board to the dangers of the Planned Parenthood organization (1 response); bringing concerns of parents to the attention of administrators (1 response); getting board to take a more active role in curriculum development (1 response); seeing to it that the board (rather than the superintendent) worked out the year's schedule (1 response); and persuading the board to recognize volunteer service to the district by presenting these individuals certificates of appreciation signed by the board and superintendent (1 response).

9. Improving school financial procedures (3/249):

One respondent felt success from improving school purchasing procedures, while two others took satisfaction in having cut district expenditures by 13% without affecting the basic education program.

The second question, again, asked: "What can superintendents do to help board members achieve success from serving on the board?" Grouping the answers into categories, listed from most important to least important, I found that by far the most frequently mentioned suggestion was "keep the board informed."

1. Keep the board informed (145/393):

This idea was mentioned over and over again: keep the board informed about possible future problems; no surprises; supply adequate written background information; and provide the board background information on each agenda item at least 72 hours in advance of each meeting.

Often in my own practice as a superintendent, I have held up sending out a memo until I have two or three communications for board members, in order to save on postage. In view of this finding, were I still a superintendent, I would send out memos immediately.

Repeatedly, respondents expressed how embarrassing it was to learn of something about the school district in the newspaper, or to be asked a question on the street and know nothing about the problem.

On the other hand one wonders the extent to which this response is due to a lack of understanding of the complexity of contemporary school systems. With millions of dollars being spent and hundreds of personalities involved in the process on a day to day basis, a superintendent has a difficult task keeping informed, let alone passing that information on. Nevertheless, the response to this question certainly indicates how important keeping the board informed is to board members. Many individual responses in the second category were also closely related to this first factor.

2. Work openly and honestly with the board (78/393):

Responses included: work openly and honestly with the board, don't be defensive (be positive); be honest and forthright; communicate with all board members, not just two or three (send communications to all board members even if only requested by one); have patience in explaining actions to the board; help board members work toward consensus, not toward a split board; emphasize working as a team; state the facts even though they hurt; give the board <u>all</u> the facts and alternatives, state recommendation and accept the board's decision gracefully; practice absolute honesty and truthfulness; no secrets, no cover up; no fighting with the board.

3. Hold orientation sessions and other educational offerings for the board (32/393):

Several (22/32) responses mentioned the importance of holding orientation sessions for new board members so that they understood what is expected and learn in some depth about how the school district operates. Other respondents mentioned the importance of conducting workshops on such topics as the budget or labor contracts.

4. Board/superintendent relationships:

Responses were split in three ways, directly related to how the respondent viewed the board/superintendent relationship. Some respondents emphasized that the board is in charge of the school district; others emphasized that the superintendent is the chief professional employed by the district; while still others emphasized the uniquely American combination of lay and professional involvement in the governance of school districts.

In answering question two, sixteen responses clearly were made from the perspective that the superintendent should realize that the board is the boss. These respondents advised superintendents to: "let the public know that it is the board that runs the district;" "pay attention to the campaign promises board members make, helping the board member be successful helps the image of the superintendent;" "superintendents should realize that they do not have to set policy, only carry it out," "take care of administrative matters according to policy," "don't ignore the board when you disagree," "be more aware of the superintendent's role as 'secretary to the board' and not the 'person in charge;'" "let the board act independently," and "encourage board members to come to school." "A superintendent has the incredible job of leading the school board so that the board can lead him."

Clearly consistent with the above responses were a set of actions which seven other respondents suggested: "follow through on questions from the board without being reminded repeatedly," "don't assume that conventional education wisdom is correct," "keep the board involved and see that the board committees function," "develop curriculum evaluation procedures which involve PTA's and other citizen groups," "foster more communication between staff and board," and "keep staff aligned with board policies."

These responses considered as a whole emphasized that the board is the public's duly elected representative, elected to control the schools, and that professional expertise in education amounts to very little.

On the other hand, more respondents advised superintendents to recognize that they are the chief professional employed by the district. In sum this view holds that board members meet but once or twice a month. They can't possibly administer the schools with a lack of professional training and minimal contact with day-to-day affairs. Board members are novices in educational law, finance, curriculum, and instructional procedures.

Respondents (29 individuals) that took this position suggested that superintendents "provide sound professional advice and opinions." "Do your homework so that there is a minimum of confusion with definite recommendations," "don't be afraid to do the job," "board members should try and help the superintendent," "help board understand difference between policy and administration so as not to confuse its role with that of the superintendent," "the most important person served is the student;" "the goal of the expertise a superintendent brings to a school is better serving the student;" "help us better educate our children;" "expedite school board meetings," and "prepare well organized agendas."

Clearly consistent with these responses were a set of actions which eleven other respondents suggested: "listen to all sides of a problem before making a decision," "accept responsibility for what happens in the schools," "protect the board, helping the board look good in the eyes of the community," "serve as a sounding board for ideas," and "establish priorities in spending."

Fifteen other respondents recommended a middle ground: "develop sensitivity to the strengths and weaknesses of individual board members," "let the board know where they can be helpful and useful," "make board members feel comfortable in asking questions," "give the board the leadership role it can handle," "keep information on level of board members," and "remember that superintendents are responsible for school district operations, but share responsibility with the board for defining and defending school district policy. In this regard, if a superintendent respects the rights and voluntary efforts of elected community officials, both parties will succeed."

5. Stay current on budget status, state laws and legislation (12/393).

6. Encourage board members to attend conferences and workshops (12/393).

7. Express appreciation to the board for its efforts; give board credit for ideas; make each individual feel needed, wanted, and useful (11/393).

   One respondent stated that "a board member will feel successful if his or her opinion is sought and given the courtesy of careful consideration."

8. Involve the board in a goal setting process (10/393):

   One board member suggested that superintendents should encourage board members to express their goals for the bettering of their district's performance. Another also encouraged superintendents to involve the board in the goal setting process, going on to say that she was involved in "too much work moving from crisis to crisis . . . not enough broad outlook activities to give the board feeling that we are managing."

9. Become educational leaders and not merely accountants (6/393).

10. Administrator/faculty relations (4/393):

    These four responses, though nonsignificant in number, were interesting because they were equally divided between those who felt that teachers should improve and be better evaluated, and those who felt that teachers should be shown more respect with less labor/management confrontation.

11. Improve public relations (4/393).

12. Be visible, both in the schools and in the community (1/393).

Summary

This study was undertaken with the idea that we need success oriented board members. As one responding Washington school board member put it:

> I believe that the strength and success of our particular board has been in the fact that each board member has been relatively successful outside his or her participation on the board and thus has not had to make work on the board an ego satisfying experience.

Footnotes

1. Cubberly, E.P., Public School Administration. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1929, p. 211.

2. Compare, for example, the following books:

   a. Reeder, Ward G., School Boards and Superintendents. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954.
   b. Asby, Lloyd W., The Effective School Board Member. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1968.

3. Those that have seen the movie "From Mao to Mozart" will agree that not only was this true in the United States, but also in China at a slightly later time. Their "Cultural Revolution" went to far greater extremes than the revolutionary activities that we witnessed during the 60's here, but the tendencies were similar. It is interesting that the prevailing sentiment in both countries is now away from issues of power toward the restoration of academic standards, authority and goals of excellence.

4. Wall, Donna, Effectiveness of School Board Members, As Perceived by Board Members and Superintendents. Ph.D. dissertation: University of Pittsburgh, 1980, p. 54.

5. Stieferman studied factors associated with Missouri school board members' decisions not to seek re-election. The most important factor he found was frustration: frustration with the lack of public support for education, frustration with the amount of dissatisfaction with the school program, frustration with the amount of dissension on the board, frustration with the amount of time wasted on unimportant matters, and frustration following from being unable to accomplish goals. (Stieferman, Donald, Factors Associated with Missouri School Board Members Decisions Not to Seek Re-election. Ed.D. dissertation: University of Missouri-Columbia, 1977.)

6. Dr. Settles made these remarks in a speech before Washington State superintendents in E.S.D. #114 in May of 1982 in Port Angeles, Washington.

7. Brodinsky, B., "How a School Board Operates." Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, 1977, p. 8.

8. Mullins, Carolyn, "The Ways That School Boards Drive Their Superintendents Up The Wall," American School Board Journal, 161:8 (August, 1974), p. 15-19.

9. Mukensnable, Allan, The Relationship Between School Board Members and Superintendent Expectations for Decision-Making Behavior. Ed.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1981. Also see: Cistone, Peter, "Educational Policy Making," Education Forum, 42:2 (November, 1977), p. 89-100.

10. Bailey, Stephen, "Coping with the Crises of Funding, Standards, and Purpose: An Expanded Role for Trustees." Arlington, Virginia: Change Magazine (Heldref Publications), May/June, 1982, p. 24-28.

11. Fine, J., "The Board's Role: Present and Future." In Dickinson, W. E. (Ed.), New Dimensions in School Board Leadership. Evanston, Illinois: National School Board Association, 1969, p. 91.

12. Mukensnable, Allan, The Relationship Between School Board Members and Superintendent Expectations for Decision-Making Behavior. Ed.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1981, p. 25.

13. Boss, Zeigler, Tucker, and Wilson suggest that there exist "democratic" and "technological" board member orientations:

> Traditional democratic theory holds that political influence follows--and ought to follow--lines of legal authority. The public elects a representative body (congress, city council, school board) to make policy. An executive body, whose senior officials are elected or appointed, is employed to administer policy. Administrators follow the instructions of legislators, who follow the instructions of their constituents, communicated either individually or collectively. The major source of power is popular electoral and organizational support, and the norm of policy decision making is responsiveness to public desires and preferences.

> The newer model, what might be called the technological model, sees the implementation of information systems and management science techniques causing a fundamental change in the governing process. Problems and policy alternatives are now too complex for the public and its representatives to evaluate. Legislatures solicit and follow the recommendations of professional administrators. The major source of power is information; the new norm of policy decision making is deference to expertise. (Boss, M. O.; Zeigler, H.; Tucker, H.; and Wilson, L. A., "Professionalism, Community Structure, and Decision-making: School Superintendents and Interest Groups." In Gove, S. K. and Wirt, F. M. (Eds.), Political Science and School Politics. Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1976, p. 39.)

Utilizing this dichotomy, it is not surprising that Erb found that in the later part of 1979, Indiana school board members tended to be more technologically than democratically oriented. (Erb, Clare, Perceived Role Orientation, Role Ambiguity, and Role Conflict of Indiana Public School Board Members. Ph.D. dissertation: Purdue University, 1980.)

Likewise it is not surprising that Lieberman found that in small districts, boards attempted to do the total job and the distinction between policy making and administration was relatively small. He states that in medium sized districts the distinction between policy making and administration is a good working guide, and in larger districts boards are continuously hard pressed to develop policy in many areas and find themselves in a quandry of wondering which policies should be resolved by the board and which should be delegated to the administration. (Lieberman, M., "Where Boards Control Schools: Where They Don't and Why," American School Board Journal, 164 (April, 1977), p. 36-37.)

When comparing the expectation for superintendent decision-making behavior with board members' formal educational level, Mukensnable found that the more educated board members were, the greater expectations they had for the superintendent to act independently. (Mukensnable, Allen, op. cit.)

Similarly, Cistone and Minar found that the expectation for a greater superintendent role in the division of labor between the school board and superintendent was positively associated with high-status occupation. School board members representing high-status occupations bring to the office special resources of skills in the division of labor and the delegation of function. They are accustomed to exercising or seeing others exercise the kinds of social control that get problems solved, and place more reliance on, and grant more latitude to hired technical expertise in the decision-making process. (Cistone, Peter, "Municipal Power Structure and Role Allocation in Educational Decision Making," Urban Education, 6 July, 1971, 147-165 and Minar, D. C., "The Community Basis of Conflict in School System Politics," American Sociological Review, 31 December, 1966.)

In an extensive study of the role of the school superintendent in the Massachusetts public schools, Gross, Mason, and McEachern examined the effects of perceived role conflict on job satisfaction, career satisfaction, and worry. Results of the study indicated that superintendents with high levels of perceived role conflict were less satisfied with their jobs and worried more than superintendents with lower levels of perceived role conflict. (Gross, N.; Mason, W. S.; and McEachern, W. W., Explorations in Role Analysis. New York: Wiley, 1958.)

14. Dickinson, W. E. (Ed.), New Dimensions in School Board Leadership. Evanston, Illinois: National School Boards Association, 1969, p. 27.

15. Wall asked board members and superintendents about their "ideal" board member (that they had known). 93.8% of the board members and 100% of the superintendents surveyed said that the individual they had in mind was successful in the vocation they had chosen. (Wall, Donna, Effectiveness of School Board Members, As Perceived by Board Members and Superintendents. Ph.D. dissertation: University of Pittsburgh, 1980, p. 93.)

16. Dykes, Archie, School Board and Superintendent: Their Effective Working Relationships. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1965, p. 116.

17. See Muckensnable, Allan, The Relationship Between School Board Members and Superintendent Expectations for Decision-Making Behavior. Ed.D. dissertation: University of Washington, 1981, p. 49. Also, a study of former board members by Pat Russell discovered that "most . . . measured the productivenss of their service by specific accomplishments such as new facilities or new or improved programs." (Russell, Pat, "Why Boardmen Quit," American School Board Journal, Vol. 59, November 1971, p. 23-26.)

18. Witkowsky, Jack, "Education of a School Board Member," Saturday Review, Vol. 54, November 1971, p. 90.

19. Kinn, Charles, Superintendent and Board Member Role Perceptions in Selected Minnesota School Districts. Ed.D. dissertation: University of Northern Colorado, 1980, p. 53. This is admittedly difficult, because the superintendent may have to first instruct his/her staff to communicate information through channels to the superintendent; and because the superintendent must learn to select what is actually important so that the board is not consumed with day-to-day administration. (Also see Frieson, D. and Bumbarger, D. S. (Eds.), Board/Administrator Relationships. Bethesda, Md.: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 044 793, 1970.)

20. Davidson, Jack, Effective School Board Meetings. West Nyak, N.Y.: Parker Publishing Company, 1970, p. 12.

21. Tuttle, Edward, School Board Leadership in America. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1958, p. 93.

22. Stapley identified six major categories which presumably point to skills and understandings needed for successful boardsmanship:

    1. Acceptance of the principle of board unity and the subordination of the member's interests to that unity.
    2. Demonstrating initiative, informed leadership, and insight in board planning and policy-making.
    3. Effective understanding of the executive function and willingness to support it when administering board policies.
    4. Effectiveness in personal relationships.
    5. EFfectiveness in staff and group relationships.
    6. Courageous action for the good of the schools despite outside pressures and influence. (Stapley, M. E., "Effectiveness of School Board Members," Administrator's Notebook, September, 1952, 1 (2).)

    Bernhard asked superintendents and school board members to describe incidents in which the behavior of board members was so critical as to be responsible for good or bad effects on board action or on the school program. Superintendents and board members from cities of 2500 and over in 12 midwestern states reported 741 of these critical incidents. From these incidents, 857 examples of positive and 423 examples of negative behavior were extracted.

    In Barnhard's study, nearly three-fourths of the negative behaviors reported fall into categories 1 and 3 of the six major categories listed above for successful boardsmanship. On the other hand the majority of the positive behaviors were placed in categories 2 and 5. (Barnhard, C.I., The Functions of the Executive. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1938.)

23. This is admittedly a rough weighting of the individual responses. I read each response and attempted to summarize the individual points which the respondent made. Individual points were then listed on cards and grouped into major categories. In answer to question one, respondents mentioned 186 ideas, with some duplication. Further, some respondents did not respond to question one, or felt that they had not been on the board long enough to have a successful experience. Four respondents felt that they never had had a successful experience on the board. "49/186" means that 49 out of 186 ideas were generally along the lines of expressing pride in the successful experience of board cooperation, i.e. category one.